



## Summer, Seafood, and Safety

For many people, summer means seafood. Something about the warm weather makes you want to order a lobster roll or fried clams, and throw a fish fillet on the backyard grill. There are plenty of good reasons to eat more fish and shellfish. Here's what you should know.

### Fishin' for Good Nutrition

Seafood harbors protein, iron, selenium, and potassium, and it's relatively low in cholesterol and saturated fat compared to fatty cuts of meat. Seafood is also an important source of the omega-3 fats eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).

Eight ounces of a variety of seafood weekly, the amount recommended by the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), provides an estimated average of 250 milligrams (mg) of EPA and DHA a day, an amount associated with a lower risk of heart disease and lower blood pressure among healthy people.

Omega-3 fats, particularly DHA, are also linked to brain development and peak vision during pregnancy and early childhood. And, a 2011 American Journal of Clinical

Nutrition study suggests that mom's higher omega-3 fat intake during pregnancy reduces the risk of her child being overweight at three years of age.

### Seafood Safety

Eating more seafood is a worthy goal, but you may be leery of seafood because you've heard the warnings. Once you understand which seafood is safest and why, it's easy to make the right choices.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration advises women in their childbearing years, and small children, to limit four types of fish. Tilefish, shark, swordfish, and king mackerel are ocean-going fish that have higher concentrations of mercury. Larger fish tend to have the highest mercury levels because they are older and have had more time to accumulate metal in their flesh.

It's possible to pass mercury to your unborn child during pregnancy and to a nursing infant when breastfeeding. Mercury is toxic to the brain and nervous system and causes irreversible harm. That doesn't mean you need to avoid seafood, however. In fact, the DGA suggests pregnant and nursing

women consume eight to 12 ounces of seafood weekly to provide their developing babies with omega-3 fats. See **Safer Seafood** for the details on low mercury fish and their omega-3 content.

### Get Ready to Grill!

It's hot. Who wants to cook indoors? Grilling fish is a great way to stay out the kitchen and get good nutrition. Grilling works best for meatier, firmer-fleshed finfish cut in to steaks or fillets with skin. Here are some great grilling tips for seafood.

**Get grill-ready.** Using a paper towel, pat dry seafood before grilling to insure proper browning when on the grill. Coat seafood lightly with oil or cooking spray to keep it from sticking to the grill.

**Cook it right.** Grill fillets skin side down. If fillets are about an inch thick or less, it's fine to grill them directly on the grate, using indirect heat. Use a grill basket for flakier finfish, skinless fillets, and smaller shellfish.

**Make sure it's done.** Use a meat thermometer to measure doneness. Cook fish to 145° F.

## Safer Seafood

Here is a list of lower-mercury seafood that's also rich in omega-3 fats. Use it to select seafood that provides at least 1,750 milligrams (mg) of EPA and DHA, combined, weekly, for an average of about 250 mg daily.

Seafood, 4 ounces, cooked	Mercury (mcg)	EPA + DHA (mg)
Shrimp	0	100
Clams	0	200-300
Tilapia	2	150
Salmon: Atlantic, Chinook, Coho	2	1,200-2,400
Salmon: Pink and Sockeye	2	700-900
Oysters: Pacific	2	1,550
Sardines: Atlantic and Pacific	2	1,100-1,600
Haddock and Hake	2-5	200
Crayfish	5	200
Anchovies, Herring, and Shad	5-10	2,300-2,400
Pollock: Atlantic and Walleye	6	600
Catfish	7	100-250
Flounder, Plaice, Sole	7	350
Scallops	8	200
Mackerel: Atlantic and Pacific (not King)	8-13	1,350-2,100
Crab: Blue, King, Snow, Queen, Dungeness	9	200-550
Trout: Freshwater	11	1,000-1,100
Tuna, light canned	13	150-300
Cod: Atlantic and Pacific	14	200
Lobsters: Northern, American	47	200

Source: *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010, Appendix 11*

When it comes to satisfying suggested seafood quotas, we've got a long way to go. American adults consume about 3½ ounces of fish a week, on average. Pregnant women eat less than 2 ounces weekly, but the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends 8 to 12 ounces a week.



**Q.** I don't eat fish. How can I get omega-3 fats?

**A.** Dietary supplements and fortified foods provide omega-3s. Choose supplements with a combination of DHA and EPA, and ask your doctor before taking them; they may interact with the medications you take on a regular basis. Foods such as Eggland's Best eggs contain DHA and EPA. Certain milk, yogurt, cheese, and cooking oils, are enriched with DHA.

## Grilled Salmon with Ginger Honey Glaze

- 1 ¼ pounds salmon fillet with skin
- 2 tablespoons lite teriyaki sauce
- 2 tablespoons minced ginger or 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- salt and pepper
- 1 tablespoon honey

Preheat the grill on high heat. Season the salmon with salt and pepper. Combine the teriyaki sauce and honey and pour evenly over the salmon. Spread the ginger over the top. Let sit for 5 to 10 minutes while the grill is heating. Place the salmon, skin side up, on the grill and cook 5 minutes. Turn gently, reduce the heat to medium, and grill until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove the skin and serve. **Makes 4 servings.**

Per serving: 250 calories; 6g carbohydrate; 0g fiber; 10g fat; 33g protein; 230mg sodium; 67mg cholesterol; 16mg calcium.

Source: Janice Newell Bissex, MS, RD & Liz Weiss, MS, RD • Authors, *The Moms' Guide to Meal Makeovers* • [www.MealMakeoverMoms.com](http://www.MealMakeoverMoms.com). Used with permission.